



— the bottom line

Budgets are certainly topical at the moment, and no less important to us than they are to Mr Keating. The LAA's budget determines what we can do and limits what we can do. No money: no services. Too little money and too much spending: expensive debt financing and less money available for activities.

Budgeting is a balancing act, and our Association has its own conservative tradition of equilibrium. Rarely has expenditure exceeded income. And a good thing too, because in common with the organisations which employ us, the LAA's business is characterised by high fixed costs. Pay the salaries of Head Office staff, produce and deliver *ALJ* and *Incite*, support State activities, subsidise the publications programme, pay interest and taxes, and 65 cents in every dollar we receive is gone.

So when the Executive Committee met recently to consider further the 1987 budget, discussion centred on how we might extract a little more financial flexibility to implement the Corporate Plan and reflect members' changing expectations of their professional body. The strategy behind our budget has now become at least as important as the numbers.

Looking first at income we set the target for membership subscriptions at 10% below the 1986 figure. Adjusted for inflation, this is close to 18% in forgone revenue. You left us in no

doubt that you wanted lower and flat fees, and that's what you'll get. Not for everyone all at once — remember those fixed costs and the need to balance the budget — but a pleasant surprise nevertheless.

Fortunately 1986 has been a good year for recruiting new members, up almost 10% on 1985. And with a more attractive corporate planned LAA we can reasonably expect to maintain the trend.

But to be generous with fees means to be stingy with expenditure items, and to push for alternative income sources. Unless warranted by unbudgeted additional income there will be no increase in Head Office staff. Rates for advertisers will rise. Publishing will be put on a more business-like footing so that it contributes, not costs. Improved cash management will boost interest income. Expenditure on travel will be reduced. All of the 89 separate expense items in the budget have been looked at first by Jenny Adams and Mike Andrews, again by the Executive, and will receive final scrutiny at the November General Council meeting.

Our bottom line is a leaner Association in '87. With your participation we can make it more responsive as well. Council can furnish the fiscal framework, but only you can re-new the LAA.

Ian McCallum
President.

Call for Nominations
Tasmanian Branch: General Councillor.
(Nominations to be sent to Ms C. Frey, University of Tasmania, School of Librarianship, GPO Box 252C Hobart, 7000.)
To be received by **20 Oct 1986.**

RMIT part-time undergraduate study

RMIT's Department of Information Services has announced that a limited number of places for new *part-time students* will be available from 1987 onwards. The Department expects to have 10 part-time places for new entrants to the Bachelor of Social Science (Librarianship) in 1987. The part-time study option has been reintroduced in response to industry requests and a continuing high level of interest in the part-time study mode. This course is normally completed over four years of full-time study or seven years of part-time study.

The Department has recently reviewed the 'advanced standing' given to some applicants including those who hold a Library Technician's Certificate/Diploma. In future, qualified Library Technicians will be exempted from some first year subjects and the second year practicum. For part-time students receiving such exemptions, this should result in a reduction of one year of part-time study.

From 1987 all students in the Undergraduate course will also be able to take a major elective in Data Processing in lieu of one of the other non-librarianship majors currently available. Unlike the current major in Computer Science, the Data Processing major offered by RMIT's Faculty of Business does not have an HSC mathematics prerequisite.

Applicants interested in part-time study in 1987 should obtain a course brochure and application form from the Department (03 660 2900, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001) or contact John Adams for an appointment. Applications for part-time enrolment are due by 8 January, 1987.

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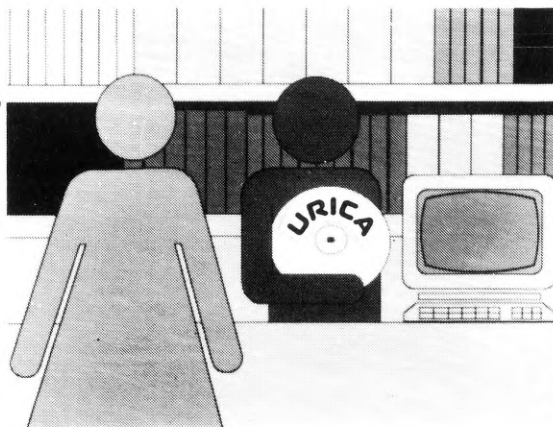
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